

"GREAT MINDS ARE SELDOM SLAVES TO FASHION."

to awaken; but the children, with frantic grief, clung with their little hands round their necks, and loudly implored to be placed, still embraced in each other's arms, under the guillotine.

"The condition of the prisoners in these jails of Paris, where above ten thousand persons were at last confined, was dreadful beyond what imagination could conceive."

"The trial of these unhappy captives was as brief as during the massacres in the prisons. 'Did you know of the conspiracy of the prisons, Dorival?'—'No.' 'I expected no other answer; but it will not avail you.' To another, 'Are not you an ex-noble?'—'Yes.' To a third, 'Are you not a priest?'—'Yes, but I have taken the oath.' 'You have no right to speak; be silent.' 'Were not you architect to Madame?'—'Yes, but I was disgraced in 1788.' 'Had you not a father-in-law in the Luxembourg?'—'Yes.' Such were the questions which constituted the sole trial of the numerous accused; often no witnesses were called; their condemnations were pronounced almost as rapidly as their names were read out. . . . The indictments were thrown off by hundreds at once, and the name of the individual merely filled in; the judgments were printed with equal rapidity, in a room adjoining the court; and several thousand copies circulated through Paris by little urchins, exclaiming, amidst weeping and distracted crowds, 'Here are the names of those who have gained prizes in the lottery of the holy guillotine.' The accused were executed soon after leaving the court, or at latest on the following afternoon.

"Since the law of the 22nd Prairial had been passed, the heads had fallen at the rate of thirty or forty a-day. 'This is well,' said Fouquier Tinville (the public prosecutor) 'but we must get on more rapidly in the next decade; four hundred and fifty is the very least that must then be served up.'"

"The young Princess of Monaco, in the flower of youth and beauty, after receiving her sentence, declared herself pregnant, and obtained a respite; the horrors of surviving those she loved, however, so preyed upon her mind, that the next day she retracted her declaration. 'Citizens,' said she, 'I go to death with all the tranquillity which innocence inspires.' Soon after, turning to the jailer who accompanied her, she gave him a packet, containing a lock of her beautiful hair, and said, 'I have only one favour to implore of you, that you will give this to my son: promise this as my last and dying request.' Then, turning to a young woman near her, recently condemned, she exclaimed, 'Courage, my dear friend! courage! Crime alone can show weakness!' She died with sublime devotion, evincing in her last moments, like Madame Roland and Charlotte Corday, a serenity rarely witnessed in the other sex."

"Madame de Grammont, disdaining to employ words in her own defence, which she well knew would be unavailing, protested only the innocence of Mademoiselle du Chatelet, who sat at the bar beside her. Servants frequently insisted upon accompanying their masters to prison, and perished with them on the scaffold. Many daughters went on their knees to the members of the Revolutionary Committee, to be allowed to join their parents in captivity, and, when brought to trial, pleaded guilty to the same charges. The efforts of the court and jury were unable to make them separate their cases; the tears of their parents even were unavailing; in the generous contention, filial affection prevailed over parental love.

"A father and son were confined together in the Maison St. Lazare; the latter was involved in one of the fabricated conspiracies of the prison: when his name was called out to stand his trial, his father came forward, and, by personating his son, was the means of saving his life, by dying in his stead. 'Do you know,' said the President of the Revolutionary Tribunal to Isabeau, 'in whose presence you are standing?'—'Yes,' replied the undaunted young man; 'it is here that formerly virtue judged crime, and that now crime murders innocence.'"

"Nearly all the members of the old Parliament of Paris suffered on the scaffold. One of them, M. Legrand d'Alleray, was, with his wife, accused of having corresponded with his emigrant son. Eve, Fouquier Tin-

ville was softened. 'Here,' said he, 'is the letter brought to your charge: but I know your writing; it is a forgery.'—'Let me see the paper,' said d'Alleray. 'You are mistaken,' said the intrepid old man; 'it is both my writing and my signature.'—'Doubtless,' replied Fouquier, still desirous to save him, 'you were not acquainted with the law which made it capital to correspond with emigrants?'—'You are mistaken again,' said d'Alleray; 'I knew of that law; but I knew also of another, prior and superior, which commands parents to sacrifice their life for their children.' Still Fouquier Tinville tried to furnish him with excuses; but the old man constantly eluded them; and at length said—'I see your object, and thank you for it; but my wife and I will not purchase life by falsehood: better to die at once. We have grown old together, without having ever told a falsehood; we will not begin when on the verge of the grave. Do your duty; we shall do ours. We blame you not; the fault is that of the law.' They were sent to the scaffold.

"The vengeance of the tyrants fell with peculiar severity upon all whose talents or descent distinguished them from the rest of mankind. The son of Buffon, the daughter of Vernet, perished without regard to the illustrious names they bore. When the former was brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal, on the charge of being implicated in the conspiracy in the Luxembourg, he said, 'I was confined in the St. Lazare, and could not have conspired in the Luxembourg.'—'No matter,' said Fouquier Tinville, 'you have conspired somewhere;' and he was executed with the prisoners from the Luxembourg. On being placed on the scaffold, he said, 'I am the son of Buffon,' and presented his arms to be bound. Florian, the eloquent novelist, pleaded, in vain, in a touching petition from prison, that his life had been devoted to the service of mankind, that he had been threatened with the Bastille for some of his productions, and that the hand which had drawn the romance of William Tell, and depicted a paternal government under Numa, could not be suspected of a leaning to despotism. He was not executed, as the fall of Robespierre prevented it; but he was so horror-struck with the scenes he had witnessed in prison, that he died after the hour of deliverance had arrived. Lavoisier was cut off in the midst of his profound chemical researches; he pleaded in vain for a respite to complete a scientific discovery. Almost all the members of the French Academy were in jail, in hourly expectation of their fate. Roucher, an amiable poet, a few hours before his death, sent his miniature to his children, accompanied by some touching lines. . . . André Chénier, a young man whose eloquent writings pointed him out as the future historian of the Revolution, and Chamfort, one of its earliest and ablest supporters, were executed at the same time. The former was engaged, immediately before his execution, in composing some pathetic stanzas, addressed to Mademoiselle de Coigny, for whom he had conceived a romantic attachment in prison, among which is to be found the following:—

"Peut-être avant que l'heure en cercle promenée
Ait posé sur l'émail brillant,
Dans les soixante pas où sa route est bornée,
Son pied sonore et vigilant,
Le sommeil du tombeau pressera mes paupières."

At this unfinished stanza the poet was summoned to the guillotine. His brother Joseph, who had the power to save his life, refused to do so—even to the tears of their common parent, prostrate before him. Literary jealousy steeled the young revolutionist against the first feelings of nature. . . . A few weeks longer would have swept off the whole literary talent as well as dignified names of France. In a single night three hundred families of the Faubourg St. Germain were thrown into prison. Their only crimes were the historic names which they bore, embracing all that was illustrious in the military, parliamentary, or ecclesiastical history of France. There was no difficulty in finding crimes to charge them with—their names, their rank, their historic celebrity, were sufficient."

* The foregoing very interesting extracts are from "Alison's History of Europe," which has been issued in a cheap form by the enterprising publishers (Blackwood and Sons); and it is gratifying to know that such an invaluable historical Work is now within the reach of almost every reader.

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